

ASK MY PRONOUNS! 😊

G(ENDER) SWAP'S STYLE GUIDE TO LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE



be yourself

G(ENDER) SWAP

FUNDED BY
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 **COMMUNITY FUND**

In partnership with



CONSORTIUM
for stronger lgbt+ communities

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A QUICK INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCING OUR PROJECT AND FUNDERS

G(end)er Swap's Style Guide to Living Your Best Life explores DIY techniques, traditional and environmentally sustainable mediums, modesty wear and disability friendly style tips for building a gender affirming wardrobe. Our collaboration is specifically with Welsh LGBTQ+ creatives, platforming the amazing artistry and work from the community in South Wales.

Our collaborators include:

**Weird Wednesday
S.P.A.F Collective
Spokesperson
Trans Aid Cymru
Who Made My Pride Merch
Aiman Rahim**

Our new resources can be found on;

Our Website: www.genderswap.org

Tik Tok: @genderswap_

YouTube: @genderswap

Instagram: @genderswap_



Thanks to funding by LGBT+ Futures: Equity Fund by LGBT Consortium (supported by Comic Relief and National Lottery Fund), we have developed this new style guide- our first print issue!



In partnership with



Exploring Sensory Friendly & Gender Affirming Clothing

Tips by Sam Long (They/He)

Sensory Needs

Identifying your clothing based on sensory needs will allow you to curate a wardrobe that will work for you. No more scratchy jumpers or too tight sleeves.

Identifying sensory triggers will allow you to find freedom in your wardrobe. **Styling and customising sensory tools** can also be a great way to make your outfits sensory friendly.



Patterns and Textures

Specific clothing textures can be a sensory nightmare when choosing the right clothing for you.

Finding textures and patterns that make you happy can have a massive impact on finding clothes that work for you, as it gives you the opportunity to **search for keywords** like **crochet, corduroy and velvet** or **spotted, floral and houndstooth**.



Accessories

Adding accessories can **elevate your look**, sunglasses can aid with visual overwhelm and hair clips can keep hair from touching your face.

Finding or altering accessories to **sensory friendly versions can expand your choices**, such as adding soft fabric to collars touching skin or magnetic closures for jewelry.



Finding Your Style

Using something to **collage your style influences and interests** like Pinterest is a great way to keep all your fashion ideas in one place.

Using **keywords for fashion subcultures** and "core" such as punk, pastel goth and scene or lovecore, cottagecore and fairycore tags will show you a curated style that you can be inspired by or base your wardrobe on.



Gender Identity and Expression

However you choose to express yourself will never invalidate your identity.

Having to dress a certain way because of dysphoria or sensory issues is a valid experience and so is choosing to dress in a way that makes you happy or in the clothes you were expected to wear your entire life.





@loudandqueercreations

Meet the Creator

Hi! This was created by Sam, they volunteer for Trans Aid Cymru and can also be found on Instagram **@loudandqueercreations**. They are a trans Non-binary queer artist in South Wales, he has a love for all things colourful and groovy.

A Queer Take on Traditional Wear

A resource exploring gender affirming style tips via Pakistani culture

My name is Aiman and my clothing is an expression of my culture and my gender. I'm from Pakistan where the traditional clothing is a **Kameez** which is a straight long tunic, and a shalwar, which is basically a pair of loose pants. They don't have a specific body shape to them so they are quite rectangular, straight and shapeless. They are easy to move around in and make me feel like **I can express myself in many ways and colours.**



Shawls or Dupattas can be used to cover certain parts of your body that you don't want to draw attention to and because the clothing is so loose you have a lot more **control over your silhouette**, and over how people would see you. That's how I **combine queerness and traditional clothing**.



@a_imx_n

Meet The Creator

Aiman is a Cardiff-based Welsh-Pakistani queer writer and poet. She part of the Asian Purrrrrsuasion trio who host and direct 'You're Invited' shows with the Queer Emporium and they will be doing a couple of shows with WMC this year.

They're passionate about empowering Cardiff's community of queer people of colour, and are an advocate of community-led systems.

GENDER NEUTRAL ACTIVEWEAR FOR CYCLING

Helpful Style Advice and Cheap Activewear Options for LGBTQ+ Cyclists.

These are some tips from a trans masc person on dressing for cycling. These tips can apply to any genders and expression and are based on **affordability, comfort, safety and style.**

For someone who cycles every day, I don't actually own a great deal of "cycle specific" clothing. That's because most clothing that's made for cycling, that's sold by cycling brands is pricey and it requires a great deal of maintenance to keep it in good shape. I'm going to be sitting around in my office, I'm going to be going to the supermarket and I don't want to be doing that in lycra.



First off **underwear**. A small sports bra with compression which is **machine washable** and unlike a binder I can still breathe. Pick **tight fitting** boxer shorts over baggy boxer shorts so there's not lots of movements going around under your trousers.

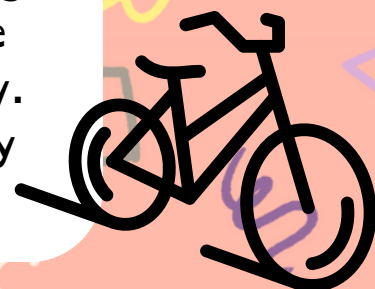
Next I can't stress enough the importance of **layers**. If you are sweaty **you can always take off an underlayer**. If it's raining and the outer layer of your clothes get wet you can take that off and still be dry. For me it's the **simple cotton T-shirt**. It does get a bit hot and sweaty unlike performance fabrics but you can just carry another with you in a rucksack.



For **trousers**, I like a chino because it still is cool looking. I recommend ones with a **stretch fabric** so you can get on and off your bike with ease and they are a bit more quick drying. I tend to go for a **tighter fit** so you don't have fabric moving around while you are cycling. Furthermore, in the winter you may have to put an extra layer over your trousers which will be easier to get on.

Acrylic 'grandpa' style sweaters are great so they don't get too warm - and they are **quick drying**.

Shoes with laces are not a good idea. If you do only have shoes with laces - make sure they are always tucked into your shoes. For winter riding I love VANS. I recommend looking at second hand options on EBay. You can find **waterproof skate style shoes** and the grippy soles are very useful for preventing feet slipping on the pedals. I replaced the laces with **silicone laces** that I got on eBay. They are great for wicking water and they add a pop of colour to my fit.



I recommend a **snood** which is a circle shaped scarf that fits around your neck and around your mouth for warmth. I found mine at Tesco.

Lastly, I recommend a **waterproof jacket**. I recommend a **thin shell** and either get a jacket with **high vis or with a bright coloured pattern** for visibility. Get one that is slightly baggier so you can add layers underneath for the cold weather.

For accessories, a **thin beanie with a front visor** is a great option for keeping the sun and rain out of your eyes. It will also fit perfectly under your helmet. Don't forget a pair of **fingerless gloves**. They will keep your hands warm while allowing you to change gears, grab your keys and use your bike lock without having to remove your gloves. They also provide lots of grip on the handlebars.

Meet The Creator

Spokesperson CIC seeks to find creative solutions to systemic inequalities to active travel. SpokesPerson works directly with LGBTQIA+, BAME, and other marginalised people to help get them safely and confidently on their bikes, and create better access to cycling.

Spokes
person
Inspiring Revolutions



@inspiringrevolutions

How Sustainable Is Your Pride Merch?

I'm Izzy (They/them), I'm a climate educator and organiser based in Cardiff, working part time in community energy and I'm also the founder of **Who Made My Pride Merch.**



@whomademypridemerch

What motivated you to start the campaign?

I've been involved in **ethical and sustainable fashion work** for a while and I remember back in 2018 there were a few articles on the BBC and elsewhere talking about pride collections and how a lot of them were being made in countries where it's **illegal to be gay**, where pride had been banned etc.

I thought it was good that light was being shone on LGBTQ+ garment workers in an industry that is notorious for safety issues for workers, and where the majority of workers are **not paid a living wage**. And it really seemed like something new and important was being highlighted by these news reports.

But what was a hot topic in 2018, seemed to disappear the next year and there was nothing, silence. I didn't think this should just be a 'discussed one year and then left' sort of issue so in 2020 I decided to start **Who Made My Pride Merch**, modelled off of Fashion Revolution's **Who Made My Clothes** and try to make sure this issue isn't just forgotten about when mainstream press decide not to report on it.

Why is this campaign so important at this point in time?

As Pride gets bigger and bigger all over the world, but especially in the Global North, more and more brands are seeking to **capitalise off of it**. Each year I see bigger pride collections, bigger corporate sponsored prides, and more and more rainbows slapped on every brand imaginable's clothing and accessories.

It's great that being queer is seen as something to be celebrated and that visibility is an important part of pride. But these brands are **capitalising off exploitation**. My ability to buy a piece of clothing to celebrate myself and **pride should not come at the expense of exploiting someone more marginalised than me**.



Each year these big brands say “Hey LGBTQ+ people we love you! Come and buy our rainbow stuff!” They might donate part of their profits to an LGBTQ+ charity based in the country they’re selling their clothes in (which is the bare minimum to be honest), they may even have collaborated with queer artists to create their collection. **But there’s someone missed out of the conversation.**



They’re conveniently focusing on queer people where they’re selling the clothes and saying nothing about the people who are making the clothes, who are often working in **unsafe working conditions**, for **very little pay**. They say they love LGBTQ+ people but it really looks like it’s **only the ones they can sell stuff to.**

How does buying pride merch new affect garment workers?

I think I'd like to reframe this question of **how does the fast fashion industry impact garment workers?** As they're the ones with the real power here, we buy into the system. The fashion supply chain is incredibly big, complicated, and conditions vary. But worldwide there are **issues of safety, working conditions, and pay**. Mass production and consumption of low cost clothing leads to cutting corners, outsourcing, long hours, low pay, factories at risk of fire and collapse, and abuse left unchecked.

In Cambodia 1 in 3 garment workers, and 28% of garment workers in Bangladesh have experience **sexual assault, harassment, and violence**. It's estimated that only 2% of garment workers worldwide earn a living wage. So it's more likely than not that people making pride collections for the majority of brands are **underpaid and unsafe at work**.



**Brands Spend all of
Pride month telling
LGBTQ+ consumers
they care for and
support us. But what
about their Garment
workers?**

In 2016 even in the UK Misguided garment workers were earning **as little as £3 an hour**, and a recent report by Channel 4 into Shein found garment workers earning **3p per garment**, working **18 hour days** with only **one day off a month**.



On top of this many of the countries where the garment industry is a big employer are also countries where **LGBTQ+ people have little to no rights**. Not every LGBTQ+ garment workers experience will be the same but this can add to issues of abuse, and reports have found that many **LGBTQ+ people are less likely to stand up for better pay and working conditions for fear of being outed**.

Big brands have the power and money to change the industry and prevent these issues, but they currently **care more about profit than the people in their supply chains.**



By unquestioningly buying clothes from these brands consumers are contributing to this system. But by putting pressure on brands, **asking who makes their Pride collections**, supporting small business and brands who are ethical and transparent, and standing in **solidarity with garment workers** who are standing up for their own rights, we can push the fashion industry today.



Imagine if tomorrow everyone who was thinking of buying a t-shirt from a particular brand emailed them and went 'Hey, I love your t shirt but I am concerned about buying. Who makes your clothes? Are they safe at work and paid a living wage?' **a brand will have to acknowledge that.**



Who
Made
My
Pride
Merch?

#WhoMadeMyPrideMerch

What brands are you targeting this year?

I'm not 100% sure yet, it depends who comes out with what collection, I like to target brands which have big popular collections to hopefully make the most impact. I used to try and target every brand in some way but I don't think that was the best tactic. Target have already launched their massive pride collection so I've started targeting them early and I am thinking of doing some in person action this year, possibly around H&M.

I'll also definitely be doing something around Levi's because they come out with a huge collection every year for pride but they **have yet to sign the international fire and building safety accord, even after five people died in one of their factories in 2022**. These deaths were preventable, and **one should not be dying for denim**.





Join us this Pride Month

#WhoMadeMyPrideMerch

Any plans for pride this year?

For pride month in June I'll be running the campaign online, but I'll mostly be resting and enjoying pride events I'm attending. I have a wonderful zine by Labour Behind the Label on the **lives of LGBTQ+ garment workers in Cambodia and Indonesia** which I'll be taking to hand out. And doing interviews like these ones! But right now I am just one busy person running this so I'm trying to make sure the campaigning is sustainable and realistic for me to do, Though I am always happy for help if people do want to get involved!

How can people wear pride merch more sustainably?

I think it's worth mentioning that **sustainability and ethics overlap!** And not only is the fashion industry unsafe for workers, it's also **incredibly damaging to the environment.** Fashion has gotten faster and faster over the last few decades which means **clothes made for cheap, to be worn a couple of times and then thrown away.** That is not sustainable. The business models of all fast fashion brands are inherently unsustainable! But as consumers **we can slow down, and also save money and have some fun in the process.**



I think there are a few key ways of doing this:

- **Don't just buy clothes for one event, make sure if you are buying pride pieces that you're going to wear them again and again. The "30 wears" test is quite a good measure.**
- **Try to support small, queer owned businesses where possible.**
- **Give upcycling and making your own things a go!**
- **If you do buy from fast fashion (everyone has different means) also ask a brand who is making their clothes and where they're made, and make the piece last!**



Here are some upcycling ideas:

- **Fabric paint and a t shirt, you can have a fully customised piece!**
- **Take some thread to an existing piece. I have a tutorial to make a tassel tee on my website.**
- **Charity shop! Find pieces to hack away and sew, or even just find some colourful pieces for a second hand pride look**
- **Make little pride patches or flags from scrap material**
- **Give tie dye a go! (for extra sustainability points you can give some natural dyeing a go)**

How do you see pride merch re-envisioned for the future?

I'd like to see an **end to the fast fashion industry**, a small ask I know, but I want to see all clothing made slower, more considered, and in a system where all of the people making them are **paid fairly, treated fairly, and safe at work**. This shouldn't be a radical ask at all, but right now it is. I love seeing people being really creative and making their own stuff and really showing their personality, so definitely more of that! Re-wearing, re working, DIY.

I'd love to live in a world where people just **wear pride stuff all year round** and it's **not a one month or a one day thing**. I think moving away from selling t shirts, tote bags, or single use plastics for a one time event, and **moving away from the weekly trend cycles** is where we need to be for sustainability.

And honestly an **end to corporate pride on the whole**. We don't need pride events sponsored by oil companies and banks, we don't need pride parades that are dominated by rainbow logos from supermarkets and restaurants that will be in the bin tomorrow. It should be about community first and foremost. Accessible to all.

Pride for some should not come at the expense of the exploitation of other people and the environment.



Meet The Creator

Izzy (they/them) is located in Cardiff, South Wales. They are a climate educator and organiser based in Cardiff, working part time in community energy and the founder of Who Made My Pride Merch



TRADITIONAL DIY METHODS

DIY Style Inspiration Via Printmaking

In a world increasingly reliant on capitalism, mechanisation & outsourcing, it is an act of resistance in itself to make something yourself.

We're S.P.A.F Collective and we're an **absurdist Welsh arts collective**. We maintain a physical connection to our work by using more traditional methods, heavily involving ourselves with the process of making. We make a variety of things; badges, zines, screen-printed textile goods, protest banners & more. Everything we make is underpinned by our **anti-capitalist ethics & penchant for DIY making**.

We're heavily inspired by slogans & graphics from vintage anti-capitalist queer badges, stickers & tshirts because they echo a hope for **something more than assimilation**. They conjured queer utopias where queers kick ass, live how they want and everyone has more than enough to eat. Old queer anti-fascist patches & badges were intended to let any passing fascist know that they are your enemy, and to let any passing queers know that they have a comrade in you - in equal measures.

WORDS & PROTEST SLOGANS

Design Techniques by the SPAF Collective



Obviously, slogans aren't going to save us. They're not going to fix the broken state we live in, or stop anyone getting queerbashed. But what they do **give us** is **hope for a better world**; it allows us, as a community, to be visible, in turn **helping people feel safer.**

The bits we make are more than just ~products~, they're **modes of communication driven by our ethics** - not just the slogans we use, but the way we design, make & think about our work. Design as a discipline has its own methodology & theory, meaning that your principles, belief & life experience will inform how something is designed and how it ends up looking.

This specific philosophy is in part informed by our own **working-class backgrounds**, and also manifests in how we operate as a business - we aim to keep what we make **affordable and accessible** to a wide range of people, in addition to providing resources to do these things yourself - such as banner making guides and badge making workshops.

We **dye our calico naturally at home in our kitchen** and let it dry in our garden - naturally dyed fabrics often have a lovely marbled effect where the fabric has been wrung out before drying. We expose our designs onto screens at the Printheaus, Cardiff (Who have a relatively cheap PAYG printing membership) and print them at home in our attic. We then cut, pin & sew the patches on our sewing machine. **Our misprints are put to one side to be repurposed in the future**, most recently being sewn into a big quilt!



You can make cool fabric dyes with relatively cheap domestic ingredients you may already have in your kitchen! Turmeric powder for a yellow dye & red cabbage with lemon juice for a pink dye - white vinegar & salt as natural mordant (seals the colour in).

You can make dope tie dyes this way too! (These are the dyes we use most often, but a quick google can bring up a plethora of cool **natural fabric dyeing techniques that utilise all sorts of easily accessible foods**, even waste such as onion skins) Charity shops are great for fabrics - an old white bed sheet can become 100 different things in 100 different colours if you want!

Cotton fabrics take dye way better than polyester or blends, so strive for cotton. In general, charity shops can be really handy for **finding low-cost art materials and tools**. There are many DIY printmaking techniques you can try at home to make your own patches & printed goods, even upcycling old bits of clothing. Papercut screen printing, lino printing & cyanotype are all relatively easy ways to print at home, with starter kits available from online art supply shops.

You can do a lot with a scalpel, some ink & a bit of paper! Youtube has a wealth of videos of people figuring out how to cut corners and do it as DIY as possible.



@spafcollective

S.P.A.F Collective are a Queer Welsh arts collective who specialise in producing badges, zines, stickers & screen printed ephemera. Their work prioritises an accessible & DIY approach.

Wearing Affirming Words And Colours

By Weird Wednesday

We use a few different methods in creating our items: screenprinting, lino print, badges, tie dye and embroidery. We wanted to give you a bit of a background of some of our items and the slogans we use.



One that is really important to us are the patches that say **“Never Not Nervous”** and **“Never Not Tired”**. This is inspired by E being a very anxious person with ADHD. Growing up being told that they were boring and lazy, they felt really crappy that they couldn't do or enjoy the things that other people did. But now they know that **it's just part of who they are and it doesn't make them boring or lazy**. As an extension of these slogans, we came up with 'feeling badges' so you can **let people know things about you without having to say it**. Which hopefully can help others to **communicate their accessibility needs** and can help them feel proud.

We started experimenting with tie dye and people responded really well so it's a big part of what we do now. It started with our ridiculous 'live, laugh, toad' t-shirts which have absolutely no meaning at all but people loved it as much as we did. That led us onto more frog themed designs, and one that is really important to us, 'Fight for Trans Youth' and 'Fight for Queer Youth' tie dye hoodies. Showing up for Queer and Trans youth and fighting for their rights is so important to our community. So these items really resonate with people and it's lush to see. It's such a powerful yet simple way to show support and it **instantly connects you with other people**. We have been tie dyeing items in different colours to represent different pride flags. So that people are able to share these statements while also representing their own identity.





A Lot of the things we do are simply what we want to put out into the world. It's us sharing how we feel - and a lot of people seem to feel the same. For example, our 'End Gender Norms' slogan because we see gender norms reinforced everyday. This doesn't just go for Queer and Trans people -but for everyone. Putting people in boxes limits the possibilities of who we can be, and it can be really damaging. The same goes for the 'Not a Lady' slogan because we are often read as women even though we are not. Interestingly, loads of cis women responded to this in a similar way. Although they identify as women, they also did not like to be referred to as 'lady' because of the gender norms that are connected to that.

Why why the bright colours and slogans?

Queer people and neurodivergent people have been told time after time to **'tone it down'**. Wearing bright colours is a way of saying **"no, i absolutely won't squash down who I am!"**. There's a proudness in wearing bold and bright colours and clothing with slogans on them. You want to convey a message to the world, your outfit reflects who you are, you can create talking points, make statements, show solidarity, connect with others who feel the same - and maybe make some people think. Most importantly, **you can just wear what feels most comfortable and right to you :)**



WEIRD WEDNESDAY



@weirdwednesdayuk

WHERE TO FIND G(ENDER) SWAP

www.genderswap.org



@genderswap_



@genderswap_



@genderswap



g(end)er swap n' shop

MEET THE ZINE CREATOR

ANDREW MERCATOR (HE/HIM)



CloudyAppleArt 
.carrd.co

Hello! I'm **Andrew / Islington**. I'm a 26 y/o Welsh trans man living in Cardiff with my husband and our two cats.

I am learning Welsh and like to dabble in lots of creative artforms, though primarily I am an artist and a writer!

I have an **Etsy** where I sell my art in various formats (stickers, zines, badges, notebooks etc) and a **Discord** server where I share my work. I am also the assistant producer, main artist and one of the writers on the fictional queer horror podcast **Neighbourly**, available on whatever podcast app you use!



G(ender) Swap 2023